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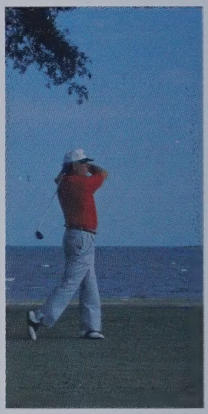
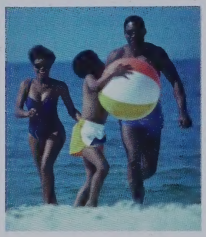
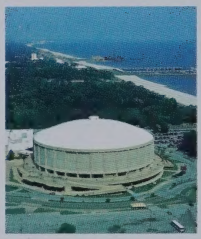
Lutillie and Ann Stepney

Harrison County







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Harrison County Board of Supervisors, left to right: Standing: John McAdams, Chancery Clerk; C. T. Switzer, Jr., Vice President, District 5; William W. Martin, District 4; Joseph R. Meadows, Board Attorney; Seated: Bobby Eleuterius, District 1; Larry Benefield, President, District 2; David V. LaRosa, Sr., District 3.

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MISSISSIPPI Star

VOL. 4 NO. 2 CONTENTS OCTOBER 1999

DEPARTMENTS

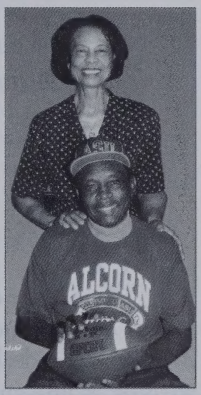
4 Publisher's Page

7 Something to Pray About

8 Book Stop

28 Guest Word

30 Calendar



COVER PHOTO: Lutillie and Ann Ruth Stepney...Page 24

FEATURES

11 Mississippi Artist Featured in White House Year 2001 Calendar

14 Family Love Raises Success

16 Mississippi Star 3rd Anniversary Pics

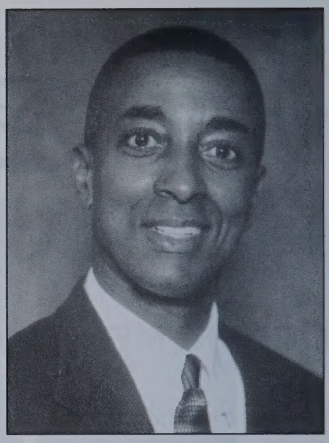
21 Lewis Daniels Makes Deals and Builds Friendships

25 Coach Stepney: A Player's Coach

Honorable Robin Alfred Midcalf *Mississippi Star* Banquet Photo Highlights...Page 16

Lewis Daniels...Page 21

PUBLISHER'S PAGE



Maurice Singleton

One of the consistent themes of several of the articles in this issue of *Mississippi Star* deals with suggesting or advising against interacting or dealing with negative people. Negativity breeds negativity. Positiveness encourages positivity and energy and goodness and happiness and other good stuff.

Mississippi Star's goal from the beginning has been to share positive experiences of people in the community. Our goal is to empower people with positive examples. So, if our readers' lives are not what they want them to be, then maybe by reading about inspiring people they will be encouraged to change their lives for the better.

Over the past three years, *Mississippi Star* has included stories about many people who have overcome obstacles, achieved greatness, or achieved what may be considered lesser feats. Our goal has never been to measure the degree or size of any accomplishment. Any measure would certainly have to involve the impact on an individual or individuals; and I certainly would not know where to begin with that.

I do know that my life has been very favorably impacted by *Mississippi Star*. Part of that has been the fact that I have accomplished something in life that I have always wanted to do. The larger part would have to be the daily doses of courage, strength and faith I get by meeting and talking with the great people I have met over the past few years.

People are so different and so alike. People are so strong and so resourceful. So bright, so giving, so caring. I have been truly blessed to be able to do what I do. I get to see the best of what people are. People are wonderful!

Certainly, we all have our bad days. And for some of us, bad luck and bad days sometimes appear to overwhelm us. But we all have our moments when what we have to give is just what someone else may need.

Thanks for your support of *Mississippi Star*!

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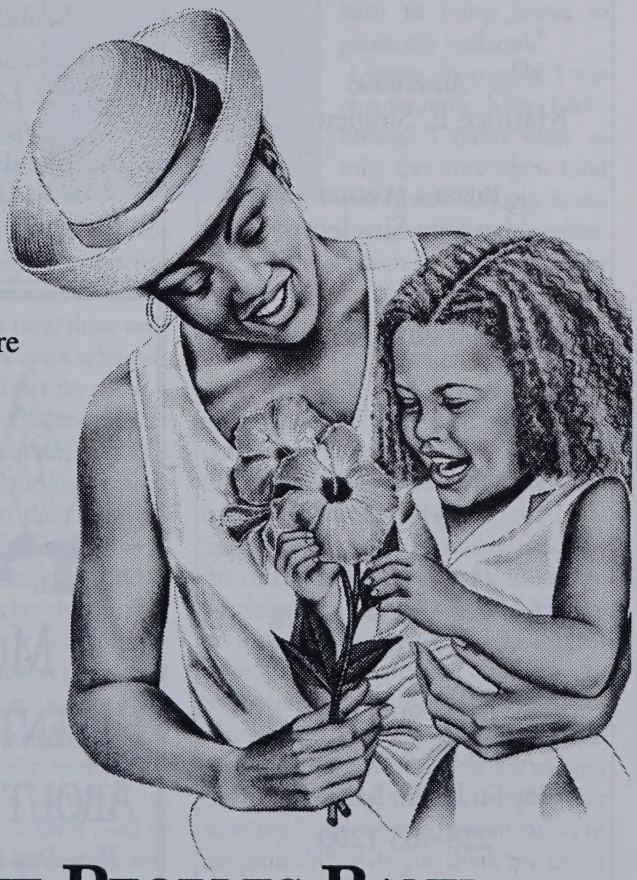

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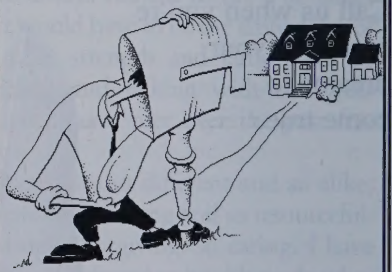
Letters to the Publisher

should be 100 words or less.
Star Calendar: Events of interest to South Mississippians should be submitted on your organization's letterhead, specifying the date, time, place of event and a number of contact. Submissions should be received by the twentieth day of the preceding month.
Be sure to include a daytime telephone number.

Mail submissions to

Mississippi Star, P.O. Box 2651, Bay St. Louis, MS 39521.

Mississippi Star reserves the right to refuse or decline to publish any submission.



MOVING? RECENTLY MOVED? ABOUT TO MOVE?

Please Drop Us A Line With Your New Address So You Can Be Sure To Receive Your ***Mississippi Star!***

Something to Pray About...
BRING BACK SOMETHING SWEET

by Stacy James Mackey

A few Sundays ago as I prepared to leave for class at church my husband said to me, "Bring me back something sweet." I giggled and retorted, "Oh, bring you back something other than myself." My husband laughed and said, "Yes!" As I walked out the door, I muttered to myself, "I ought to bring you back a scripture." On Sunday evenings I attend discipleship training. The night's lesson was Proverbs 3:4,5 "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

I smiled with a little confident attitude as the teacher began. I thought that I knew these scriptures. As the lesson rolled on and comments from the class went back and forth. I began feeling as if maybe I don't really acknowledge God in everything I do. Our teacher shared what that scripture meant to her and how she puts that scripture into action during her day. This lesson affected me so that I left the class feeling as if I needed to analyze my whole approach to my relationship with God. I got in my car, turned off my radio and began to pray. I asked God to show me areas of my life in which I wasn't acknowledging Him.

Now why did I ask that?! I said, "Okay Lord, let's start with my husband's request for something sweet — I'm praying and asking you Lord to direct my path to the place to pick out the item to bring home to please my husband."

I began driving like I was chauffeuring Miss Daisy because I didn't want to miss the turn when God said here. I thought surely God will place upon my heart the restaurant or store at which I should stop. I kept praying. All of a sudden I realized that I had passed all the restaurants. I was a few miles from home. I said, "Okay Lord, I don't want to see the disappointed look on my husband's face when I walk in the door empty handed. I could just stop by the grocery store and pick up some ice cream." "Did I say do that!" the Holy Spirit admonished me. I walked in, sat on the couch next to my husband (whose watching football) with this goofy expression on my face. I wanted to explain before he could notice that I had brought back nothing sweet. After I confessed my evening and my slow drive home talk with God, my husband looked at me and said, "It's okay baby, I didn't really want anything," and returned his attention to the game. What do you think my lesson was? I hope I've given you something to pray about.

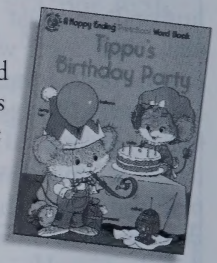
BOOK STOP

by Herta Smith

Hard to believe fall is finally here and Halloween is right around the corner! I found a great little book called the Halloween Activity Book at my local grocery store. I called around and K-Mart, Wal-Mart and most of the bookstores are also carrying it. I paid $2.50 for it and it has some scary stories, fun recipes, games, crafts, and other stories (including a child-friendly version of "*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*"). It also has some great inexpensive make yourself costumes in it and some really well done, full color masks. Next time you're in your favorite store see if they have it. As always, all the books reviewed in the Mississippi Star will be donated to a local public library. This moth the books will go to the Pass Christian Public Library.

Another great source for a wonderful book list is the Coretta Scott King 19999 Award & Honor Books List. You can get a copy of the list free by sending your request to: Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, American Library Association, 50 East Huron, Chicago, IL 60611. Some wonderful birthday and Christmas books are on the list.

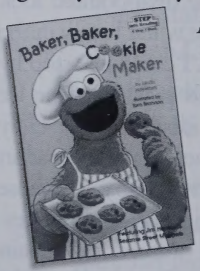
Ages: Up to 3 years



Tippu's Birthday Party is part of Happy Ending Preschool Word Books, published by Modern Publishing. Tippu mouse and his friends celebrate his birthday with a party and a treasure hunt. This well-done book will help your little one learn the names for all kinds of things as they help Tippu celebrate his birthday. A real advantage to this book is that it is printed on very heavy stock and will withstand little hands and even little mouths.

Happy Ending has put out a whole line of sturdy, colorful storybooks.

Ages: 4 years to 6 years (pre and beginning readers)



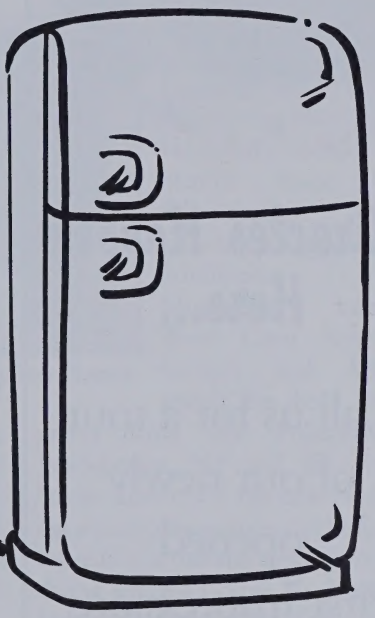
Baker, Baker, Cookie Maker, written by Linda Hayward and illustrated by Tom Brannon and featuring Jim Henson's Sesame Street Muppets is part of a series of books that will take your child from being a pre-reader all the way to stories with plot lines and full paragraphs. All the books are inexpensive, very colorful with great language. Lots of rhyming in the pre and beginning books and word building sentences in the books for the better reader.

Another book for this same age group is Judy Hindley's *Funny Walks*, illustrated by Alex Ayliffe and published by Bridgewater Books. How we walk, where we walk, who walks. Scurry, dawdle, bumble along, trot, sway and list goes on and on! This is a good book for you and your child to act out.

Ages: 4 years to 7 years

Papa Tells Chita a Story, written by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard and illustrated by Floyd Cooper, published by Simon & Schuster. This author and illustrator are Coretta Scott King Honor recipients and have also written and illustrated a book called Chita's Christmas Tree that would make a great Christmas present. Papa tells great stories and this one is about the Spanish-American War, secret messages and lots of great characters, both human and animal.

Chita is based on the author's cousin, Chita Elizabeth McCard Shipley, born in Baltimore



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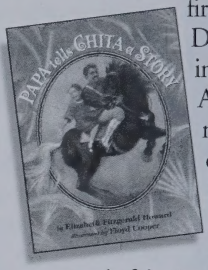
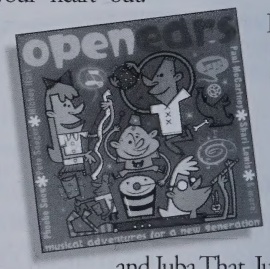
in 1908. Her father was one of Baltimore's first Black doctors. Dr. McCard fought in the Spanish-American War and named his only child Chita after the Spanish word for little girl or muchachita. There is a wonderful picture of Dr. McCard and Chita on the back cover of the book.



Ages: Child to Grown-up

Open Ears, Musical Adventure for a New Generation, edited by Sara deBeer, project and talent coordinator, Karen M. Digesu and published by ellipsie kids…

One Of My Favorite All Time Books! Pete Seeger tells you how any one can be a songwriter. Phoebe Snow tells you how to sing your heart out!



Learn how to make a Den-Den (Japanese Fan Drum). Bill Harley tells you how to Juba This and Juba That, Juba slapped the Way to Rap. Sing, play and learn how to make musical instruments. Shari Lewis does her Rubber Band Banjo; Paul McCartney tells you about Music for a Lifetime and the list of famous contributors goes on and on. The directions for making the instruments are clear and very easy. Cardboard, spoons, tape, things you find around the house or the schoolroom are all you will need. This book will have everyone making a joyous noise!

As always, I look forward to next month and remember – literacy begins the day you bring them home from the hospital nursery. Happy reading!

Mississippi Artist Featured in White House Year 2001 Calendar

Joseph Anthony Pearson

The White House Historical Association and WRE/AMI of Greensboro, North Carolina have selected 13 American artists for the White House Year 2001 fine art calendar. The artists visited Washington, D.C. recently for a private tour of the White House to select subject matter for their painting. Their commissioned artwork will be featured in the commemorative calendar and will become part of a permanent exhibit entitled "White House Impressions: The President's House through the Eye of the Artist". Each artist represents a state that was admitted into the union between 1791 and 1836. These states followed the 13 original states and the District of Columbia. The artist selected to represent Mississippi is Joseph Anthony Pearson.

Mr. Pearson received his B.S. in Art Education from Jackson State University in 1969. He received his Master of Education degree in 1994 from William Carey College on the Coast in Gulfport, MS, and attended the Art Students League of New York on a full talent scholarship. Joseph has spent much of his career working as a civil servant illustrator and teaching self esteem drawing workshops at local alternative schools and museums including the Lauren Rogers Museum, Walter Anderson and the George Ohr Museum. Joseph has been commissioned to create several community murals that are located at the Renaissance, The Learning Center Alternative School, the Harry C. Tart Headstart School and Stennis Space Center Administrative Building. His work has appeared in art exhibitions across Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Ohio, New York, Georgia and Arkansas. Joseph has been awarded grants from the Pollock-Krasner Foundations, NY and the Vermont Studio Center, VT. His artwork, including several commissions, can be found in collections across the country including that of Mr. Bill Cosby; The Hammond House, Atlanta, GA; City of Pass Christian; Mississippi Museum of Art; and the secretary of State's Office, MS. Mr. Pearson currently lives in Waveland, MS.

The Year 2001 calendar is the second in a series of four calendars honoring our nation's house. The states represented in this calendar are: Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, Maine, Missouri, Arkansas, and the District of Columbia. This historical tribute to the White House will feature original paintings by the 13 artists as well as educational material about the White House. The White House Historical Association will continue the project for the following three years through 2003, enabling an artist from each of the 50 states, the

District of Columbia and the 5 major territories to be represented in the series.

The purpose of the commemorative calendar series is twofold: to heighten the public's awareness of the history of the White house at this special time in its history and to use proceeds from the sale of the calendar to acquire objects of historic importance for the permanent White House collection of fine and decorative arts. "This unique project celebrates the contemporary artist's view of this revered house and the special place it holds in the hearts of all Americans," said Neil W. Horstman, executive vice president of the White House Historical Association.

The White House Historical Association is a nonprofit organization chartered on November 3, 1961 to enhance understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the historic White House. Proceeds from the sale of publications and other items are used to fund acquisitions of historic furnishings and artwork for the permanent White House collection, assist in the preservation of the public rooms, and further its educational mission.

The White House Year 2000 calendar is now on sale at fine booksellers and department stores. It can also be ordered directly from the White House Historical Association for $12.95 plus $3.00 shipping by calling 1/800-555-2451, or by visiting their website at www.whitehouse-history.org. The next calendar in the series, featuring Mississippi artist Joseph Anthony Pearson will be available in April 2000.

Early detection

and treatment can help save your life.

An estimated 165,000 new cases of

PROSTATE CANCER

have occurred among men in the U.S. this year alone. Today, one out of ten men will develop prostate cancer by age 85.

Who is at risk?

Incidence increases with age. Over 80% of all prostate cancers are diagnosed in men over age 65. Rates are 40% higher for black men than white men.

What do I look for?

Prostate cancer warnings include:

- Weak or interrupted urine flow
- Inability to urinate
- Difficulty starting or stopping the urine flow
- The need to urinate frequently, especially at night
- Blood in the urine
- Painful or burning urination
- Continuing pain in lower back, pelvis or upper thighs

What should I do?

Early detection is extremely critical. After 40, a man should have a digital rectal examination with his regular annual physical checkup and an annual prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test at 50 and older. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms described here, contact your physician immediately.

For more information or a physician referral call:

865-DOCS (3627)

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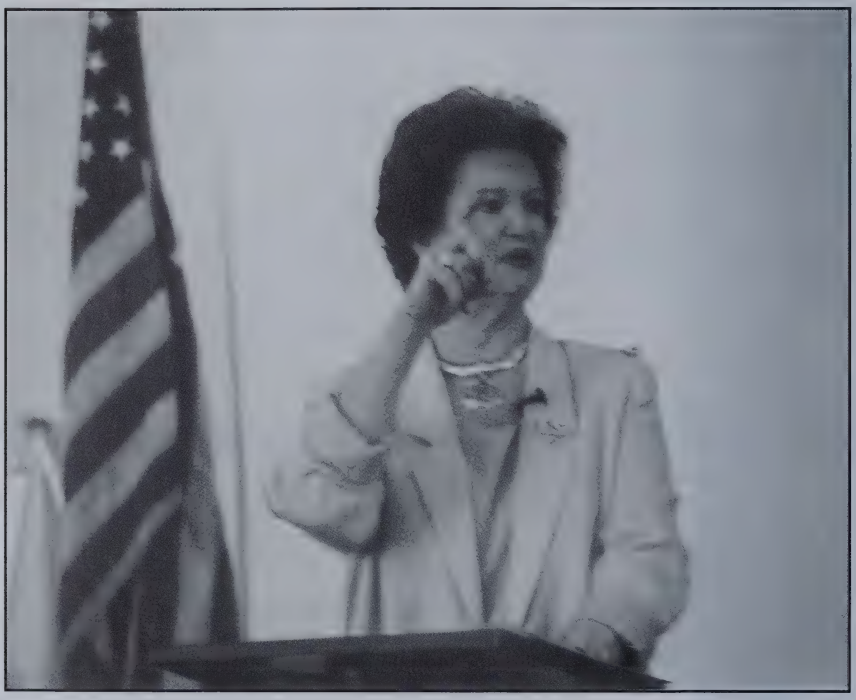
McCullough Says Family Love Raises Success

by Jeanie Lunsford



Nationally known motivational speaker Mamie McCullough brought a message of laughter, love and encouragement to parents and students attending a seminar sponsored by the Moss Point Schools in September.

McCullough, the ninth child of Georgia sharecroppers grew up in grinding poverty. Her widowed mother couldn't read—until her daughter taught her during junior high—but she taught her children responsibility, caring and the importance of education. As a result of her mother's inspiration, McCullough left Dixie, Georgia, and traveled 1000 miles to a Christian College in Texas with only $25, two flour sack dresses and a bag of fried chicken. "I didn't know you had to major; I didn't know you had to minor, and I didn't know you had to pay," said McCullough. "All I knew about college was that that was where you went to get better."

The college president saw potential in this poor girl, and he and his wife took her into their own home to save her the cost of room and board. According to McCullough, that one man" faith and encouragement took a Georgia farm girl from poverty to a Ph.D. She eventually became a noted author, the principal of a 5A high school and a nationally known speaker. "You can never repay the people who believe in you," said McCullough. "You can only pass it on and believe in someone else."

"You can never repay the people who believe in you. You can only pass it on and believe in someone else."

-- Mamie McCullough

McCullough had sage advice for students and parents alike. She advised that students should make time for their parents and to thank them for all they do. She advised the parents to keep lines of communication open. "Ninety percent of all family problems come from a lack of communication," said McCullough. "Remember, listen and silent have the same letters."

She advised all workshop attendees to avoid negative people. "We take up the characteristics and habits of the people we are around, so stay away from negative thinking."

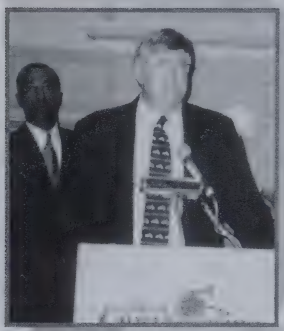
Her sense is that too few families establish and enforce rules. McCullough advised parents to make rules and stick to them, even when it is difficult. "One of the most important things we have as parents, children, church members and citizens are rules," said McCullough. "There is not an education problem, there is a societal problem."

But McCullough believes that the problems in society can be fixed by creating a strong and loving family. She believes that you can achieve almost anything, like the little girl in a sack cloth dress who went to college not knowing you had to pay. Today, she has a successful business, a top-flight education, a loving husband and children, and many honors, "All because someone believed in me when I didn't believe in myself," said McCullough.

McCullough's workshop was part of Moss Point Schools ongoing parent/family educational efforts, and sponsored by the Moss Point Schools Curriculum & Instruction Department and School and Family Partnership Department. Funding was provided by and Eisenhower Grant.

For more information about the parent workshops offered by Moss Point Schools, contact the School & Family Partnership Department, at 474-3398.

Mississippi Star Third



Chevis Swetman, President and CEO of The Peoples Bank, addresses banquet guests

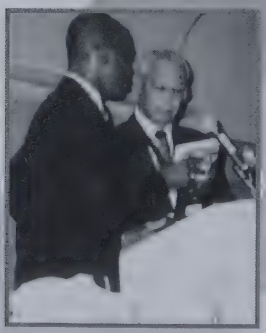
Fr. A. Francis Theriault, SVD receives award from Ethel Shaw

Wilma Peters (left) presents award to Bridget Weatherly

Joe Monti presents award to Lettie Burger

Janet Lynn accepts award from Hal Leftwich

Jeannie Deen presents award to Kevin Antoine



Dr. Gilvert R. Mason is presented a copy of Dr. Martin Luther King's Biography

Attorney William W. Martin (left) presents award to Bruce Northridge

nniversary Banquet Pics

Sandra Edwards accepts award for Emma Johnson from Dr. Roy Irons

The Honorable Judge John Whitfield (left) accepts award from Hal Leftwich

Nate Fairconnetue presents award to Dr. Barbara Thomas

Felecia Palmer (left) presents award to Yolanda Mayberry

Sharon Singleton (right) accepts award from Kathleen Monti

USM professor Dr. Pat Smith talks about Dr. Gilbert R. Mason

Awards coordinator Cynthia Saucier

Attorney Joseph Hudson presents award to Glenda Singleton Beal

Photography by Jimmie Carter

Maurice Singleton Sr. accepts award for granddaughter Torrie Jakes from Pam Bilbo

Eric Labat receives award from Suzanne Michaels

Tessie Tims (left) presents award to Sandra Edwards

Bruce Northridge (right) accepts award from Attorney Joseph Hudson

Robert Boone, Vice President of the Isle of Capri Inc. accepts sponsorship placque

Stacey Goddard (right) accepts award from Kathleen Monti

Jim Thriffiley presents award to Clementine Williams

Maurice Singleton Jr. presents award to Tania Price

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Ollie Oliver (left) presents award to Hermolee T. Barnes

Pam Bilbo presents award to Nate Fairconnetue

Award moderators Lonnie Bradley and Eric Labat

Attorney Warren L. Conway introduces The Honorable Robin Alfred Midcalf

Singleton and his sister Gina Shelby

Vonretta Singleton welcomes banquet guests

Nate Fairconnetue, Master of Ceremonies

The Honorable Robin Alfred Midcalf, banquet speaker discusses the purpose of the "cocoon" to the caterpillar and the ultimate butterfly and relates it to our development.

Sales Manager Finds Success by Finding Ways to Make a Deal Work

By Maurice E. Singleton, Jr.

As a child, Lewis Daniels wanted to be "somebody" when he grew older. Living in the projects of Hartsville, South Carolina, he wanted more out of life. Raised by his mother, a single parent, Lewis did not want his wife to work as hard as his mother worked to provide for her three children. He wanted to raise himself out of the projects and grow to become a resourceful person who could provide for his family and enjoy his life with his children.

Lewis Daniels in the driver's seat of a great reputation and successful career path

"Be careful what you wish for!" Today, Lewis appears to be realizing his childhood dreams of success. He is the sales manager at Pat Peck Nissan in Gulfport. He sits in the tower spot over the sales floor, approving deals; making deals and helping salesmen create happy customers.

It appears that his mission is to make everybody around him happy. And that may be; but Lewis also appears to be making himself quite happy in the process.

"I go to sleep happy and I wake up happy," said Daniels. "I pray a lot and thank God for what I have. I can't change today. I've got three beautiful daughters: Dominique, Tiffani and Danielle. They're my reason. They're my reason for getting up every morning to work from eight until. To be able to provide for them and they not having to want as I did as a child is truly a blessing. It really is."

Daniels was promoted to sales manager at Pat Peck Nissan in August of 1996 after a very successful two and a half-year stint as a salesman at the dealership. He was the dealership's salesman of the year in 1994 and 1995. During the second year he won salesman of the month honors seven times. He was salesman of the month three of the first four months of 1996 before being promoted to sales manager.

"He earned his way," explained Carl Stark, the dealership's general sales

manager. "He is good with people. He's honest. He cares about the customers' needs. And he did an excellent job as a salesman. Everybody likes him. Customers like him.

"It's what you do within you that makes you successful," Stark added. "It starts from within with the belief that you can succeed. That kind of confidence has enabled Lewis to fulfill his aspirations."

That kind of confidence has also earned Lewis a very good salary, which he says is "$60,000+" annually.

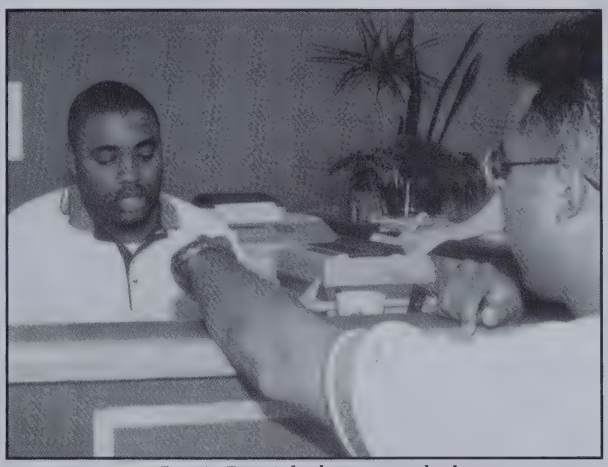
How/where did Lewis Daniels develop the confidence and skills to lead to the success he has had?

"Success comes from having the ability to deal with people in general," Daniels explained. "That has to come naturally. People are going to like you. People are going to hate you. You're dealing with a diverse public. Everybody is not going to have the same attitude and approach toward buying a car."

Daniels said that his mother is also largely responsible for his success. She was outgoing and sociable. She was pleasant and friendly. Observing her involvement in church activities was a good lesson for Lewis to observe as a young boy.

"My mom was always a great entertainer," Daniels recalled. "She did a lot in the church. She was a very organized person. I learned how to be organized from her."

Daniels also gives credit to a little league baseball coach for helping to guide him in the right direction. The coach recognized Daniels' talent as a pitcher while in little league and drilled in him that pitching was his ticket to a better life. So Lewis paid for his ticket with many hours of practice, perfecting his fastball that by the time he was a senior in high school was clocked at 98 miles per hour.



Lewis Daniels discussing deal with salesman Claudio Irias.

"I ate, slept and lived baseball," Daniels recalled. "Baseball was my ticket out of the ghetto."

That fastball became the trademark of a winner. Daniels led Hartsville High School to a South Carolina State Championship. He pitched game one in the best of seven series and also the championship-determining game five. The fastball then became Daniels' ticket to North Greenville Junior College.

A term in the Marine Corps followed. This is where Daniels believes his appreciation for positive living was refined.

"I learned the discipline and patience of dealing with people in the Marine Corps," he explained.

He participated in Desert Storm and received the Certificate of Accommodation, which is the third highest honor a soldier can receive. As "point man" for his battalion, Daniels and others infiltrated enemy lines on ground. They secured enemy soldiers and took POWs.

"Our biggest operation was to seal off an enemy airport," he recalled. "There were a lot of casualties. And I also lost a close friend. It made me realize that I had a lot to be thankful for. It could have been me.

"I was able to tell his parents that he died in combat. It was not a fluke," he explained. "It didn't make me weak; it made me stronger."

Daniels' mother, his experiences and the people he has surrounded himself have contributed toward the development of a confident and very likable young man who has made the world around him a very comfortable place for Daniels. He likes people and people like him. He tries to solve automotive-purchase problems for people, and at the same time he wins new customers and new friends.

"Don't ever say what you cannot do," Daniels explains. "If you can't get all the pie in the sky, get a piece of it. And be happy with what you get."

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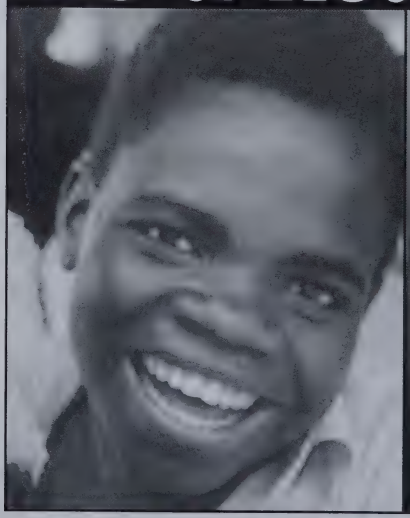


Don't Get Wasted On Drugs.

Coach Lutillie Stepney: A Player's Coach

Coach and Ann Stepney standing in front of Ace, their German Shepherd, on the back of the truck that was given to Coach by former students.

People say that Coach Lutillie Stepney has a "green thumb." The garden in his backyard is a testament to that. In early October, the bushes that separate his backyard from the vegetable garden are still a vibrant summer green, and so are the trees and his recently manicured lawn.

It is quite obvious that Coach Stepney enjoys the outdoors and watching things blossom. Having known Coach Stepney for approximately three years, I am also quite aware that his appreciation for cultivating and developing items in nature are not limited to the botanical species.

Helping young people grow, blossom and flourish are what Coach Stepney enjoys most. "Coach" - as he is called by just about everyone who knows him – has encouraged many young people to further their education over the years; and he continues to do so. Many of the young people he has advised took his advice and earned college degrees and are now productive citizens residing in cities across the country.

Coach retired from teaching in 1990, concluding a 36-year career as a coach and educator, but he hasn't retired from encouraging young people to go to college. In fact, he acts as a volunteer academic recruiter, helping students to enroll at several colleges and universities, including Georgetown, Florida A&M, Texas Southern, Prairie View A&M, Tuskegee, Morehouse, Spellman and his alma mater, Alcorn State.

"He has always had that knack for communicating with young people," says Prince Jones, Gulfport Public Schools' athletic director. "He has been a great role model for them (students) to get their work done in high school, both athletically and academically. He has

Coach who enjoys working in the garden is said to have a "green thumb."

been instrumental with kids going to college."

That knack that Jones speaks of is something that Coach Stepney learned first hand. He benefited directly from someone who showed similar concern for him.

"What really got me started was a coach I had when I got out of service," Coach Stepney recalls. "He told me that he was going to take me to Alcorn. He wanted me to get back to school. So he took me to Alcorn and introduced me to faculty members. He told me to stay there and not come home until there was a holiday."

Coach followed the advice of his former coach. And during that same time he also developed a "play sister" friendship with Ann Ruth Johnson who also encouraged him to further his studies. Coach followed Johnson's advice and earned a bachelor's of science degree.

Coach had studied auto mechanics, and according to his expectations of himself prior to Johnson's encouragement, he had told his roommate - the late Medgar Evers - that he had begun to achieve one of two goals he had set for himself before going to Alcorn. One thing he wanted was a degree; and his second goal was to get a wife. With Johnson's encouragement, the bar was raised on the first goal and the second goal blossomed right in front of him.

"Baby was telling me that I needed to go to college," Coach recalls the advice of the former Miss Alcorn to whom he has been married for forty-seven years. The energetic couple appears to touch everyone with whom they come in contact in a very special way.

In 1955 he began teaching and coaching at the public high school in Marks, Mississippi, in a very poor Delta school district. He was the school's first coach. He coached basketball, football and softball and also taught four classes. This is where he began his mission to encourage, push and make young people want more out of life.

"We had to work hard," Coach recalls. "They had to work hard. I insisted that they finish high school. Then I insisted that they attend college. I attended every church in Marks. Baby and I visited every child's parents. By doing that they realized that we were really concerned about them and wanted them to succeed. They appreciated that.

"What really struck me my second year," Coach added, "when I got the first kid from there – Ezra Towner – a scholarship to Jackson State, everybody began to listen. The next kid I helped get a

scholarship was Henry Clay. His daughter is our first Godchild."

Since that first Godchild, thirty-nine more have come. And the children are very serious about their Godparents. And very appreciative!

In 1992, sixteen former students from Marks surprised their former coach and teacher with a brand new pickup truck.

Forty Godchildren appear to provide an irreplaceable sense of happiness for the Stepneys who experienced two unsuccessful pregnancies. The forty Godchildren include former students, children of former students, high school athletes, college athletes and professional athletes. Many other former students and children that have either been taught by the Stepneys or played on Coach's teams are also very close to them.

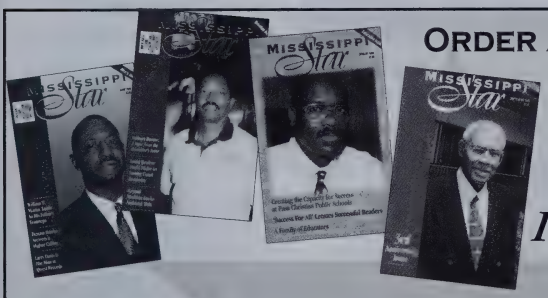
The Stepneys have been incredibly generous to the communities in which they have lived. They have helped many young people find their way through the unfamiliar and sometimes unfriendly mazes they encounter.

Medgar Evers would have been extremely proud of his old roommate for making a difference in so many lives.

"When I stop and think about the kids I've helped, it makes me feel like I want to do more, to touch more lives," says Coach. "It makes me keep going. I want to help others to achieve their goals."

"He would have been a great father," Mrs. Stepney adds.

There are at least forty Godchildren and hundreds of former students, friends and others who know Coach and would probably all agree: "He is!"



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GUEST WORD

THE MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH THAT REALLY WAS

by Ree Elliott

I recently had the pleasure of attending Mississippi Star's annual awards banquet for the second year in a row. I had thoroughly enjoyed myself last year but was soon to discover that among this year's distinguished guest speakers was someone that would really touch me. The person I'm speaking of is The Honorable Robin Alfred Midcalf. When she spoke she shared with us her personal feelings and parts of her private life with such sincerity that I feel that she created a bond with everyone in the room. Because of this bond I ask Judge Midcalf's indulgence for the purpose of this letter to allow me to call her – "Robin."

When Robin began she said that when Maurice invited her to come he asked her to give a motivational speech. After sharing a little of her life and some stories about her daughter, Robin told us of a story she had heard of someone finding a cocoon with a caterpillar in it struggling to get out through what was obviously a hole too small. Not wanting to see the poor caterpillar suffer, the person got a pair of scissors and enlarged the hole so the beautiful butterfly could escape. But what came out was not a fully developed butterfly. It was only then that she learned that it was through the struggle to squeeze through the tiny whole that the caterpillar would fully develop into a beautiful butterfly capable of taking care of itself as nature planned. Robin then pointed out the lesson that we all must learn as parents that as much as we would like to make everything in our children's lives easy for them, by so doing we keep them from the struggle that would make them develop fully and become capable of taking care of themselves.

I am guilty of being one of those parents who wants to be there to help my children every step of the way. For a long time my often-wise wife has been trying to tell me to let the kids walk on their own, but I never really understood until I heard Robin's analogy. I have thought a lot about the

story of the caterpillar and believe that there is a great deal of wisdom to be had from it.

As if this was not enough to think about, Robin then went on to tell us how life is too short to surround ourselves with negative people and negative ideas. She stated (and I share her belief) that we should all try to surround ourselves with positive and happy people who will brighten and enrich our lives instead of bringing us down. I agree that we can each make choices that will make our lives happier and more fulfilling.

I sincerely hope one day to be able to meet and thank Robin for the thoughts she shared and the thoughts she inspired.

This truly was a motivational speech that touched us all!

Ree Elliott is the city manager of New Orleans for Exhibit Installation Specialists based out of Philadelphia, PA. He is also president of the Bay St. Louis Youth Football/Cheerleaders Association.

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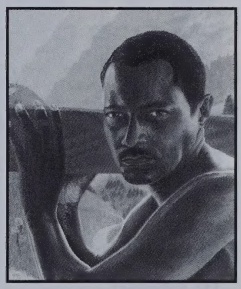

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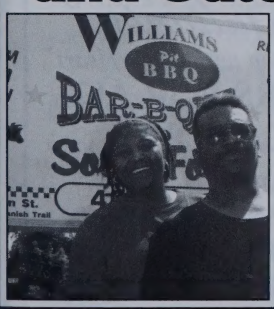

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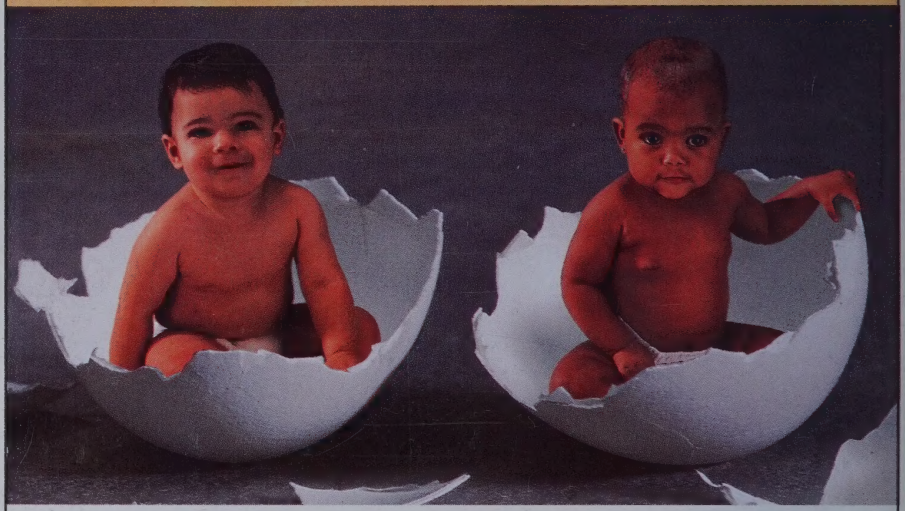

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